

# FROM WEAKLING TO STRONG MAN AND ATHLETE.

By PERCY C. SMITH.

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SOME fourteen years ago, a few yards from my father's forge, one of those glaring posters appeared. It represented the late John Gruhn Marx, known as the "King of all Strong Men," who was performing feats of breaking horse-shoes, lifting weights and other performances which required enormous muscular force. His pose on that hoarding was a fine one indeed, and stated that he was appearing nightly at the Batter-

sea Palace of Varieties. Besides giving his performance, he was offering £1,000 to any man who could defeat him in four feats. To me a feeling of inspiration came, and during the day the records of Samson repeatedly came to my memory, till I was convinced that I ought to journey to this building. In my youthful manner, I thought of how I might see him cast down with ease enormous pillars of stone, carrying upon